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FLOOR DEBATE

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LB 536

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: Mr. President, this is the motion that I have discussed briefly in connection with opposition to Senator Chambers' motion. I, as I have listened to the debate about this issue, it has become clear to me that this is an increasingly inefficient and time-consuming way for the Legislature as a whole to try to resolve the complicated issues that have revolved around this bill, and those issues not only involve funding streams, whether the funding streams are to come from a commodity checkoff, whether the funding is to come from the General Fund, whether they are to come from...and I'm still a little bit confused about whether it's a gluten tax or a distillers grain tax or whatever it...whatever it is, whether it's some tax on the by-product essentially of the distillation process, how much revenues we might, for example, expect to generate out of interest on the...I think it's called the EPIC Fund, how much we might be able to generate from other sources, and then how that is paid out in the form of production credits to one or at least one or more qualifying ethanol plants and also, as the bill stands, to a project that I think, if I recall correctly, has had some production but is not now...or maybe it is now, in production. I...the status of Sutherland always seems to escape me. But, at any rate, trying to resolve all of those issues by a series of amendments on the floor when we have really proponents of the bill arguing amongst themselves about what they want to do and what they want to suggest to us to do doesn't seem to me to be a very efficient use of the Legislature's time. Now, if opponents are attacking the bill and offering amendments I guess that's another matter, but as I've...if I've understood some of these things correctly, we have a large disagreement amongst the proponents of the bill about what the shape of the bill ought to be and what the respective contribution should be from the revenue streams that I've noted, and, in order to make everything fit, exactly where the revenues that are generated by whatever funding source, whether it's General Funds, checkoffs or distillers grain, whatever the source of revenue doesn't seem to matter altogether as much as who gets it. I guess we shouldn't be surprised at that. But given that complex set of issues that we're...is being suggested that we can resolve with a few more hours of debate on the floor of the Legislature, I think it is entirely appropriate that we rereference or that we recommit, is the